

Crowe, Heidi

From: Smith, Patrick
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2011 2:24 PM
To: Crowe, Heidi
Subject: FW: PIB comments

Some comments to be added to the next minutes as an attachment.

Pat

From: Barb Schmitt [mailto:barb102466@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2011 12:46 PM
To: Smith, Patrick
Subject: PIB comments

Mr. Smith,

These comments are brought forth by Robert and Barbara Rose.

NON- AGENDA ISSUES that are applicable to "**any public matter**" regardless of the level of interest to the public. See 51 Mont. Attorney General Opinion #12.

In accord with the above referenced authority the following "non-agenda" items are forwarded to the PIB so that the chairman of the Board can list them on the agenda and provide adequate notice that they will be discussed at the meeting. each non-agenda item and and related comments concern matters within the jurisdiction of the MDOC and is therefore within the perview of the PIB.

1] The high side at MSP is a totally warehoused unit contrary to the very nice, however, incorrect depiction of it on the DOC website. How long are you going to continue to believe you can deceive the public as to what you are really doing? I believe you are creating an incredibly volatile environment. I believe you are organizing this by hindering inmate development, shrinking all programs and property as well as hindering the inmates ability to stay in close contact with their family and friends. This is a far cry from the rehabilitative environment you wish to sell to the public.

2] All votech classes have been canceled on the high side further diminishing the ability for inmates housed there to be rehabilitated. There are very few jobs to occupy the inmates time. Inmates are locked down 16 hours a day. Why then do you need so many officers to secure these inmates? I could see the increase of officers if you had the programs and movement within the institution you used to have in years past.

3] The video on the DOC website states that the department values family relationships and that they are committed to rehabilitation and also that the close units are for the worst offenders and ones that can not follow direction. That is untrue. You give inmates three year write ups and force them to be housed in a volatile situation with no incentive to correct their behavior all the while being subjected to the drama and violence of the locked down units. Also, the department has and does terminate visits between a husband and wife forever when such infractions should be put on non contact visits for a period of time. The non contact visiting room is never used. The department has aided the destruction of many relationships that are hard enough to endure when left to their own dysfunction let alone with the added hardship of retaliation and arbitrary decision making of the department.

4] You want inmates to be respectful and not fight and do drugs. I want that as well. Here is a exercise. Separate potential officers into groups of two. Lock them in a bathroom 16 hours a day. Tell them of the rules and regulations then make new things up daily to mess with them and blame their visitors when when an officer brings drugs to them. Take their contact with the outside world away and see how long it takes before they start to resent and disrespect the ones that do these things to

them and the others around them. I know that sounds so far fetched but it is true and you know it. The department hopes we all go away and things can resume as before, where they do whatever they want and have no accountability.

5] In the visiting room there is to be a relaxed atmosphere. Visitors used to be able to put their arms around each other while walking around. This allowed husband and wives, boyfriends and girlfriends and fathers and children to have some time to connect and maintain a positive element in their personal relationship. This was taken from us a few years back. The reason was that officers could not see in the blind spots of the visiting room and while people were rounding corners they could not see what they were doing and the department feared that drugs were being transferred at those times. A reason I felt was appropriate because who knows what other people are doing. Now there are cameras in those blind spots. The public paid for those cameras and I believe we should be able to have that freedom back and when certain individuals are caught doing things they are not suppose to they should be dealt with on a one on one basis. There are also less than half the daily visitors there were when we were allowed the privilege of walking around with arms around each other.

I have asked numerous times to be provided with the statistics on how many people were caught actually bringing drugs into the visiting room. I have never been provided with that information. I know that is because there is very few times that it has actually happened however we the visitors are punished because the department refuses to accept that the officers not the inmates visitors are the major suppliers of inmates drugs.

6] Pictures have been diminished as well. These pictures are cherished bits of life to inmates and the family and friends in them. We are no longer allow to have black and white or sepia pictures. Why? Officers cant tell if a tattoo is fresh or not when looking at a black and white picture. That is a very poor excuse for a reason. Inmates are strip searched after EVERY visit. Don't you think that the officer standing in front of a totally naked inmate could tell if a tattoo he had was fresh or not better than someone looking at a color picture? This is just another arbitrary decision made by an officer that is being upheld by the command post. When my husband asked about this new policy he was told by Major Woods " Where is it going to end? " Like its a hardship for the department to develop black and white pictures. No it isn't. We pay a dollar a picture for that memory. We should be able to have it anyway we want it. Major Woods then stated that pictures are a privilege and could be taken away at any time. Being threatened with things being totally taken away is not the appropriate way your department should handle these issues. It is however the way the department gets people to back down and accept, with resentment, the deminishment of yet another thing that makes getting through their sentence easier. Inmates family and friends receive the same treatment when trying to understand and get answers to their questions and concerns. Most don't want to comment fearing the retaliation on the inmate and themselves that will most assuredly follow such inquiries. When I asked about it to the officers on duty that day they didn't have any knowledge of the policy change. Yet another crack in the consistency of the department of corrections.

7] Without consistency of policy and procedure how does the department expect officers to effectively do their job and visitors to the institution to follow the rules? It does however make it possible for arbitrary decisions to be upheld. I expect my government and their employees to do their jobs according to their guidelines and policies not to make up the rules as they go along.

8] Retaliation is another thing that continues on a day bases at MSP and I'm sure all institutions within the DOC. My husband and I have a law suit in which my husband was representing us in a court appearance. The day before the hearing my husband was sent to the hole on some trumped up charge of having a weapon. All this was dropped, however, my husbands legal documents were gone through and some legal papers taken (and to this day they have not been returned). When my husband appeared in court he was not given his paperwork so that he could effectively represent us. This was the departments way of getting ahold of our legal paperwork and to hinder our ability to litigate this case. It is a federal offense to do such things but the department has done it twice now to my husband. Retaliation. A way of life for the DOC. Why dont you just put it on your mission

statement that you will do whatever you want whenever you want and that includes retaliation on anyone who dares challenge the DOC? At least then the public would not be deceived into the syrupy depiction of all is well within the DOC.